DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 438 110 RC 022 204

AUTHOR	Nelson, Margaret K.; Smith, Joan
TITLE	Working Hard and Making Do: Surviving in Small Town America.
ISBN	ISBN-0-520-21574-5
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	279p.
AVAILABLE FROM	University of California Press, 1445 Lower Ferry Road, Ewing, NJ 08618 (cloth: ISBN-0-520-21574-5, $45.00; paper: ISBN-0-520-21575-3, $16.95). Tel: 800-777-4726 (Toll Free).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Economic Change; Economic Factors; *Employment Patterns; Family Life; *Family Work Relationship; *Labor Market; Qualitative Research; *Rural Areas; Rural Development; *Rural Economics; Rural Family; Rural Sociology; Sex Differences; Sex Role; Underemployment; Wages; Work Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	Dual Labor Market Theory; Self Sufficiency; *Vermont

ABSTRACT

This book reports on the effects of economic restructuring on the livelihood of working families in a rural Vermont county. Specifically, a study investigated family strategies to ensure and enhance daily survival including gainful employment (informal and formal), moonlighting, self-provisioning efforts, and non-monetary exchanges with other households. The study is based on in-depth interviews with 117 individuals in 81 households and a random telephone survey of 158 households. Chapter 1 describes local economic restructuring that resulted in the replacement of good jobs with less desirable jobs that failed to offer decent wages, permanent work, or secure benefits. County demographic data illustrate specific changes in the labor force and employment opportunities. Chapter 2 compares the survival strategies of two different sets of county households: those in which at least one member managed to find and hold onto "good work" and those in which household members were all involved in "bad work." Although education was clearly significant in the acquisition of some good jobs, it did not ensure that workers would hold onto good jobs. Chapters 3-4 focus on income-producing activities (the dual-earner strategy, moonlighting) of the two households, as well as non-income activities that helped meet household needs (self-provisioning, nonmonetary household exchanges). Chapters 5-6 explore how different survival strategies gave rise to gender differences and the implications of gender for the division of domestic labor. Chapter 7 considers individual attitudes toward the family's survival strategies and how individuals made sense of and responded to the changing labor force, their jobs, and their social world. This study concluded that wages alone could not meet the needs of most families involved in the study, and households with better jobs had greater access to a combination of economic activities. Appendix contains information on study methodology. Contains chapter notes, a bibliography, and an index. (LP)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.